Revelation regarding Pokhran-II test

748. SHRI NANDAMURI HARIKRISHNA:
SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the reaction of Government to a scientist's harshrevelations with regard to Pokhran-II test;

(b) whether it is a fact that 45 KT yield could not be achieved in the test;

(c) whether it is also a fact that not a single member of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) has the necessary experience or expertise to be able to calculate the energy yield from fission or fusion reactions or blasts; and

(d) if so, the details of (b) and (c) above?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) has issued a statement confirming achievement of designed yield of tests carried out in 1998 at Pokhran including the thermonuclear test.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Controversy over nuclear test

749. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in view of a disclosure made by a scientist there was a controversy relating to yield of the Thermo nuclear test conducted by the country in 1998;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the counter arguments available with Government to deny the assertion made by the scientist?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) There have been some reports in the Press raising doubt on the yield of the Thermo Nuclear Test conducted in 1998. In this connection the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) has issued a statement confirming achievement of the designed yield during the Thermo Nuclear Test.

(c) Yield of nuclear tests has been confirmed through several diverse methods by different groups.

Uranium mining

750. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of the strong public resentment in regard to mining of Uranium in Meghalaya that it has been carried out without following the norms of radioactive extraction; and

(b) if so, details of program of the Government and steps taken to control, protect life and property and create awareness among the people against radiation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL), the Public Sector Undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy has not started mining of Uranium from its proposed project in Meghalaya.

(b) Not Applicable. However, it is intimated that the operations of UCIL are under strict surveillance of Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, State Pollution Control Board and Directorate General of Mines Safety. To generate awareness among the people and address their concerns, awareness programmes have been organized in the region.

Inspection of sites of nuclear plants

751. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has granted permission for inspection of the proposed sites of nuclear plants to super nuclear powers;

(b) if so, the number of sites so far inspected; and

(c) the details of such sites inspected and approved or disapproved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) to (c) The proposed sites for setting up nuclear power plants based on foreign co-operation do not need international inspection and approval.

Nuclear energy from sea-sand

†752. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any possibility of the generation of atomic energy from the material found in the sea-sand of 6,000 acre of coastal land near Shree Jagannathpuri which is being allocated by the State Government of Orissa to 'Shree Viswavidayala' managed by a trading company named 'Vedanta'; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In Orissa, Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) has identified 1.82 million tonnes of Thorium bearing monazite resources. Thorium is a fertile element and can be converted to fissile element to produce Atomic Energy in the 3rd stage of Nuclear Power Programme of India.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.